

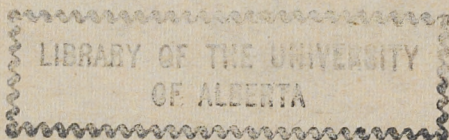
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STET

1957



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STET

A LITERARY SUPPLEMENT TO THE GATEWAY
EDITED BY H. E. YOUNG

March

1957

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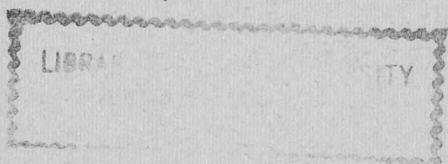
To The Reader . . .

This is the fifth issue of "STET", your literary magazine. Those few undergraduates who have contributed have, I am sure, done so in the true spirit of "Art for Life's sake." That is, they have either tried (a) to see the general through the particular or (b) to make the particular prove the assumption of the general. There are dangers implicit in both approaches and only the reader, by dint of intelligent application of his experience and his imagination, can decide on the worth of the literature.

Perhaps it may be well to remind the reader, who is, I am sure, *an amateur* creative artist himself, of the great gulf between personal art and objective art, between newspaper art and true art, between paperback "art" and this art.

For all the inadequacies to be found in the following pages I am sure that no dishonesty prompts me to say on behalf of all Stet's contributors:

- Let It Stand. — H.E.Y.



The Alexandrite

Crowfoot Glacier was almost hidden by clouds. He had watched them for an hour, coming down slowly over the toes of ice. Only a few cars had gone by. Rain was beginning to soak through his windbreaker. It was a slow rain, almost like mist, and cold. He rubbed his hands together and hunched up in his clothes.

He started to dig a cheese sandwich out of his pocket, but put it back when he saw a car coming far down the road. It didn't pay to let them see you eating. He held out his hand, thumb up, and the big car passed him, slowed down, and stopped. A woman stuck her head out the window.

"Well, come on kid, hurry up." He started to run.

The back seat was warm. He smelt the steaming wool of his jacket mixed with the scent of leather.

"Where are you going, fellow?" the driver asked him.

"The icefields."

"You're lucky kid. Well, Sandra, we're stuck with a passenger."

The woman smiled and looked at him. Two long black pencil lines curved up from the corners of her eyes. "What's your name boy?"

"Never mind his name," the man said. "He's a stray, someone we picked up on the road. I'll tell you what, Sandra. We'll give him a ride up to the icefields and back to Banff if he'll show us some wild animals on the way. None of your chipmunks and squirrels, mind you. The kind of stuff they advertise up here, wild sheep and goats, and a moose or two. We haven't seen a damned thing so far." He turned partly around. "you want to go back to

Banff?"

"Sure, that's where I work." The boy felt his name slipping away from him. What is a name, he thought. I'm really Jack Camp, but sometimes I'm a cabin-boy who splits wood and now I'm a stray riding in a big car and going to the icefields. "I just work in the summertime," he said. "I really go to school."

"Every young fellow should have to work," the man said. "Good experience."

"I'll bet you never worked." the woman smiled at him.

"Me?" The driver patted her bare shoulder. "I've worked all by life."

"He's a sugar king," the woman told the boy. "He owns plantations in Cuba."

"Gosh! tell me about them." He leaned forward.

"There's nothing to tell." The man waved his hand. "Just acres, and acres of sugar cane. You can make a fortune."

"I bet it's beautiful." He saw it all in his mind. Blue skies and water, the green stalks of cane.

The car pulled up before a large frame building. "There they are acres and acres of ice. God, I feel cold already." The woman shivered. "What's that thing?"

"Halfway House," the man read. "Let's have some coffee. You too, kid. Then we'll go look at your damned ice and snow."

They sat down at the counter. "I don't know—" the man said to the waitress. "We picked this fellow up on the road, and he promised to show us some big game on the way up. So far we haven't seen a

groundhog. Do you think he's worth a cup of coffee?" The customers were looking at him, smiling. The waitress brought the coffee and set it down before him. He curled his red hands around the cup and tried not to hear what the man was saying.

"Not one little gopher, even," he said to the couple next to him, and everybody laughed.

He stood on the glacier a long time, until finally he heard the man calling from the dirty ice at the edge. He turned back and they climbed into the car.

"Keep your eyes open boy," the man told him. He looked out the window. "Reminds me of Switzerland."

"Gee!" said the boy. "What's Switzerland like?"

"Mountains, ice and snow. Cold."

"Oh." The boy scrunched down in the seat, and watched the mist settling over the mountain peaks. He felt warm and drowsy.

"I've been all over the world," the man said. "I got this ring in Russia before the war." He held up

his hand. An emerald-green stone caught the light for a moment.

"What is it?" the boy asked.

"Alexandrite. It turns blood red at night."

"And you got it in Russia?? I've always wanted to go there."

The man looked at him. "Why would you want to go to Russia now?"

"To see if all that stuff a fellow hears is true. I want to go and see for myself. You know to see if Communism is really as bad as they say."

The car screeched to a stop.

"You're pink!" the man shouted at him. "Pink. If I had my way every Red and everybody tinged with Red would be lined up against a wall and shot. Get out."

The boy opened the door and stumbled onto the road. He thought the woman looked at him sadly, but she didn't say anything, and the car pulled away from him.

When he looked up the clouds had completely covered the toes of Crowfoot.



Adulescens



By H. E. Young

Deep in that ancient land near youth
The restless spring can reach but blind
To summer's mind and man-teared truth;
But when the sense-Pandora's fled,
The ruins grown greywalled around
The single soul of dark world's dread,
Then, surely, love is gained; And scars
Were never more than memory's gift
Of nights that filled with fadings far
That strange once-alien, gods pursued
Deep in that holy land near youth.

The Canvas Of Love

In France, in Paris, he had felt the incomprehensible greatness shouting inside of him, and he had covered his canvas with the greatness, and the critics had acclaimed him another Picasso. "This is the wonder of the universe," he had said, and he had emblazoned his canvas with the wonder, and the critics had acclaimed him another Leger. But a wise man had said that the greatest art grew out of love; so he had opened his life to love, he had whispered, "I love you," and with the love crying for canvas next to his soul, he had returned to New York—with Marie.

The studio was dim. The sun had crept away toward the horizon, trailing tattered banners of red and orange, and the soft light that ebbed through the tall windows was tainted with twilight. Below, the shadows were gathering in the chasm between the buildings. They flooded into the city from the east, moved slowly down the streets. The anxious traffic scurried through them.

He sat, morose and tired, in the dimness. The easel stood indifferent, and he stared at the streaks of frustrated red that were stark on the canvas. Weariness pressed down upon him like guilt. He expected, momentarily, to hear her quick steps on the stairs. Sadness hung anti-septically in the air.

marie marie i loved i love i still
love why else my heart so cold
against my ribs red red i loved with
greatness completeness i did not
think possible with a fervor left me
worn exhausted a white heart
against my ribs red an allness that
has emptied my soul i do not hear
your steps on the stairs: my love
was to give birth to a soaring wing-

ing canvas of love frustrated red on
my canvas even wisest of men some-
times wrong . . .

The first week in New York: he remembered their first week in New York. Filled with the fire of his success in Paris, filled with the glowing coals of Marie's soft whispers, he had felt the heady beginnings of the canvas of love throbbing immense throughout him. Marie had touched his neck with her lips as he lay dreaming beside her. Her fingers had touched his soul, and her voice had been a sensual longing, incarnadine.

"Paul . . ."

He had turned toward her; the soft brown eyes whispering into his, the red parted lips, the white skin with a phosphorescence of its own.

"Hold me, Paul."

He was drawn by her lips. "Marie," he had said, "I love you more than I will ever be able to tell you."

"More than anything, Paul?"

"More than everything."

"Hold me, Paul. Tight. Hold me tight."

Her warm breath had caressed his face.

"Don't ever let me go," she had said.

"I cannot."

The wise man had spoken of love; but he could have never loved Marie. Never. For all that first week, the fire of creation had been seared in a greater fire. The white canvas had brooded, forlorn, before the drawn drapes of the window.

The shadows had surged to the top of the world, now, they had engulfed the last rays of the sun. He shivered, lonely in the purpled studio. The darkness stained the canvas obscuring the ragged red,

and he watched the lights of the city resurrect the day in miniscule splatters. They were cold and uncheering. He shivered again.

loveyes yes yes love is a wonderful thing aftermath of love not such wonder shall i ever paint my canvas of love exciting love exhausting love love garnet love leaves me numbed powerless to paint love cruel love always been forever a paradox? o tell me of love i said and a wise man but even the wisest of wise men sometimes wrong . . .

The second week in New York: he remembered their second week in New York. He had found a studio, in the Village, with great windows that reached from the floor to the ceiling. The canvas had rejoined in the streaming light. "I shall paint the pureness and the beauty of love," he had said. The exhilaration had seized him, and he had taken up his brush, and he had seen the love shaping itself on the canvas. "I shall paint the pureness and the beauty of love," he had said.

"Paul?"

"What?"

"Where's Coney Island?"

"In Brooklyn. Why?"

"Can we go there?"

He had turned away from the love that was a mute tangible thing on canvas, turned to look into the imploring brown eyes. "Marie," he had said, "if you want to go to Coney Island, then we shall go to Coney Island."

"Oh, Paul," she had said, "I'm so excited. Can we go right now?"

"Right now."

She had kissed him. "I love you so very much, Paul," she had said. "Because you're so very nice to me."

"Go get your coat," he had smiled.

They had gone to Coney Island. They had laughed, high above the world, on a towering ferris wheel, with multifarious lights flashing with each pulse beat. They had laughed, lost in a silver mirror maze, seeing themselves glinting on all sides. They had laughed, strolling

through the happy throngs, hand-in-hand, eating a fantasy of pink cotton candy. Laughter. There had been much laughter . . .

The darkened intimacy of a small nightclub. The gilt-plated voice of a saxophone had spiralled through the soft velvet rhythms of a bass and drums. Marie sat across the small checkered table from him, her face flushed from the dancing and the martinis, her eyes smiling.

"Happy?" he had said.

"Very happy."

She had taken his hand in hers. "I want it to go on and on, Paul, Will it?"

"Yes, Marie, it will go on and on."

on and on and on and on i am an artist i had thought i was an artist if i am not an artist must be something can it go on and on and on . . .

"Yes, Marie, it will go on and on."

"I love you so much, Pal, because you're so very nice to me."

"Happy?"

"Don't ever let me go."

"I cannot."

cannot no i cannot love is a wonderful bleeding thing a wonderful thing and and and i love you marie but my canvas of love you to give birth you aborted and oh god must it me so?

"I want it to go on and on, Paul. Will it?"

"Yes, Marie, it will go on and on."

on and on the endless ticking of time of blood of pain through this ever-expanding universe i am an artist the wise man said what did the wise man say wise man wrong i have loved o how i have loved i have nothing a cold white heart against my ribs red raw where is my canvas of love . . .

In the darkness of the studio, he buried his spinning head in his paint-soiled hands and sobbed his confusion. The star-spattered night peered unsympathetically through the tall windows, and the tinsel starlight settled soundlessly on to his still figure. Yesterday, it had stopped going on and on . . .

"Paul."

"What?"

"I want to go to the zoo."

"Uhm."

"You didn't even hear me," she had said.

Irritated, he had thrown down his brush.

"What?"

"I want to go to the zoo."

"Then go to the zoo."

"I want you to come with me."

"Marie," he had said, "I can't."

"Why not?"

"I've got to finish this painting."

"You've been fooling around with that silly old thing for three days now" she had pouted. "And every day, it looks worse."

"It does, hey." H had picked up his brush again, inwardly feeling that she was right.

"You don't love me any more," she had said.

"Oh, for Christ's sake, marie, certainly I do."

"Then come to the zoo with me."

Patiently, he had tried to explain it to her. "Besides," he had concluded, "we need the money."

"Pooh," she had said. "No one's going to buy that silly old thing anyway."

"Someone bought the last one, in Paris didn't they?"

"Well, I wouldn't have,"

He had turned back toward the painting.

"I want to go to the zoo."

"Marie, I can't."

"You don't love me."

"Marie . . ."

Over and over again, until, angered by her insistence, an anger that had been further aggravated by his unfruitful, enervating efforts with the painting, he had shouted, "Yes, that's right! I don't love you!" She had thrown her clothes into a suitcase and stormed out the door, ignoring his entreaties and apologies.

Yes love a wonderful thing always thought love a wonderful thing not so sure how I shall I paint my canvas of love love is nothing but a cold white against red red marie marie love love yes loved wisest

sometimes wrong.

He looked out over the city. In Paris, there had been a great feeling of power within him, on just such a night as this. He had looked up at the stars, he had seen the wonder of the universe and he had covered his canvas with it. That was in Paris before he had met Marie. But now . . . now there was a broadening canvas before him and, in the light of the stars, the stark red cried out at him.

red red red love red passion naked groping blind darkness. love is love is blue soft blue dreaming blue blue is love tender soothing blue warm caress of summer's twilight hazy vista of far-off memory. red is passion . . .

He sat transfixed. "Yes, blue is the color of love," He said, and he hurriedly switched on the lights. There was the feeling of power in him again, as there had been in France, but it was not the wonder of the universe that he saw now. With the excitement trembling through him, he picked up the brush. The strokes were bold and confident.

* * * * *

A week, later, when he had finished the painting, the critics acclaimed him another Georges Braque. And it was shortly after that, that he saw Marie again. He caught only a glimpse of her, through a cafe window, as she walked past on the arm of a man whom he had never seen before. He did not feel angry, or hurt, or sad.

A wise man had said that the greatest art grew out of love; Paul gazed out the window and realized that the wise man had spoken the truth.

marie marie so many loves but one true love is blue although i had found it wrong was wrong true love reaches beyond marie and on and on not centered upon marie nor upon others but on and on yes marie learned about love blue and painted love blue upon a white white heart.

With the love strong inside of him, he walked from the cafe and out into the street.

- - - A Place

Outside the wind wails and the world is cold;
But I know a Place where the sun is shining,
Birds circle and sing in a brilliant blue,
A bobbing breeze stirs laughing leaves
As it teases the tree, here, in this Place
Flower beds are full with the joy of summer,
Minute mimosa and fluted foxglove,
Low bending lilac and a rich red rose;
So fragrant, false and fragile,
To touch one stem is treachery;
And yet for a time, and time is eternal,
Peace abounds beneath these branches.

Summer here may last a lifetime,
And loveliness grows
With each green day,
Or it may be shattered in a single second,
By one careless word or wish;
And then the winter closes in,
Gaunt branches glisten with icy snow,
A creeping coldness kills these flowers,
And birds lie dead with loneliness.

How many footsteps falter through?
How many weave their way?
Through the summer soft and winter wild?
What homage do they pay?
I do not know nor do I care,
For there is joy today,
Warm golden light and lilting song;
So frail a thing can never stay,
This joy in the garden of my Soul,
Some unsuspecting wind will come,
And summer will be blown away.

Letter Home

You ask how things are going and how soon I hope to be back. I don't know really, but I hope it is soon; you get homesick, even in all the excitement of exploring a new and teeming planet.

I know, boss, that you were keeping this secret as much as possible, and I'm happy to report that so far we seem to be doing all right, although the 'flying saucers' excitement keeps flaring up from time to time with more or less vehemence. In fact, our expedition has actually been sighted a few times, but there have been so many palpably false reports mixed indiscriminately with these one or two true ones that there is little fear that earth will recognize the true state of affairs for quite some time, if ever.

One factor that works strongly in our favor is that earth people, all of them, are still superstitious in one area or another. By reading their books, I find they have always been "seeing things", as they phrase it, although as you know they have never before actually been subject to visitations from other planets. The fact that they are so superstitious is a great help in keeping this project essentially secret because they have now begun to develop some power to see superstition in others if not in themselves. Thus, when one of their number reports to the others that he has seen objects travelling through the air at great speeds that must certainly be controlled by creatures from outer space, any evidence that he can produce in support of this contention is treated with very great suspicion

if not outright disbelief. It is for this reason, chiefly, that I feel sure that the precautions that we are now taking should be quite sufficient for purposes of secrecy.

You suggested that I might begin my report on the earth creature with descriptions of several typical specimens to give you a general idea. In this connection, I thought that my observations of one of the worker men might serve for a starting point.

I was in one of their stores, disguised, as usual, as an ashtay, when this fellow came in. Let's call him Customer A. A big, strong brute of a fellow, Customer A greets the help with boisterous profanity. The help, not to be outdone, replies with similar recitals of his own. Customer A smiles in admiration at seeing a man of his own high calibre.

A girl passes. Laughter. Profanity. "Dirty" jokes. "Did my stuff come through yet?" asks A. It turns out that it did not. The help heaps profanity on those supposed responsible, A erupts with more profanity, profane farewells are exchanged, and A leaves.

Well, I don't know that this tells you much more as I've already mentioned that the earth creature is superstitious, scared of his own shadow, really. We saw the same sort of thing on the eight planet of the old Zon system, if you remember. I must say, though, I don't think that even the Zons tried quite so hard to cover up their fear—presumably even they were a little more advanced, a little less fearful. To prove how brave they are, A and the help not only cast every material

thing with which they must deal infinitely deep into the bottomless pit of their curses, they also swear at each other with great glee, the unconscious objective being to show that nothing happens when they do so, that both are invincible.

Well, as you will rightly be saying to yourself, I cannot prove anything by a single incident, nor do I intend to try to do so. If all goes well, I'll compile hundreds of anecdotes such as this, get all the other information you wanted with regard to physical conditions and the like, and still be home, I hope, for the Vayz anniversary.

This much I will say, though, on the basis of our experiences with Zon, it is safe to say that earth won't be ready to join the Glazec Union for quite a while yet, probably not for ten generations—ten of our generations, that is. Earth creatures have not existed as intelligent creatures for more than a million years and it will be at least that long again before they are able to get along effectively among themselves, let alone cooperate with the members of the planet Union. Compared with us, they are little more than animals. I'd catch one and bring him home, but I guess he'd get homesick.

Just for laughs, though, I will make it a point to bring home some

of their "science fiction". In their superstitious fears, they imagine the beings of other worlds to be, if possible, even more violent than themselves. Perhaps it will give you some idea of just how violent they are when I tell you that ever since we came here three vreks ago, or, as they would say, ten years ago, I've had Jhinx hard at work just trying to gather a brief outline of the major wars that have taken place here during the last two thousand vreks.

Earth violence, like Zon violence, can be interpreted as the natural weakness attendant upon a recent evolution from a carnivorous line. They really have no instinct for cooperation; rather they are still very much "dog-eat-dog" (see note) at bottom. As with the Zons, the earth creature's superstitious fears of evil spirits, beings from outer space, and the like, are really fears of his own savage tendencies. He's beginning to realize that his survival depends on his ability to cooperate with his fellows, and is suffering all the stress and strain that necessarily accompanies any fundamental change in the nature of a creature.

Well, I think that's all for now. As you see, I'm enclosing a complete G2 report with this letter. I will write again soon. Hope to see you all again in twenty or thirty vreks.

Rozak.



Once is Always: Moon Or No

●

By H. E. Young

The moon comes, is not coming, has not come,
Has never, if not comes, come.
The moon at any skyful point
Is its own watchful history
And there is its magic.
Yet we have stopped to see its sign
And forgotten it is the moon.
The moon of many a night,
Each of these one night, this night,
Was crucible for silver sap,
And carried, as all life does,
The total fright of its past;
And ours, all totally unlike,
Are the only eyes of its radiance.

* * * *

Recipe:

An Apple is the food of sense and soul
While telescopes leave nothing whole.

* * * *

A great love, in its tiny circumstance,
Is all that now may slit the rinded eye
And blood the soul with the moon of all time.
There was a moon, O, before we had it.
We've all had it and thus
(And insofar and as much as)
We all, dead, drunk, or purple
In a peopled patch,
Had it, we now do.
God's good, but especially when he laughs.
But a laugh's no good without a terror
And maybe, (I'll sob you to sleep
With the moon in your keep)
Not a laugh at all.

Interlude

It was a penetratingly chill January evening. Roger walked up the gritty stone steps of the library and went inside, beyond the glass doors. He paused for a moment by a dusty potted fern, adjusting his eyesight to the gloomy rows of books and the yellow lamps which hung from the ceiling. Turning, he saw Lisbeth behind the desk, stamping library books. She did not see him. He stood still there, regarding her objectively: her pale, oval face, her black hair knotted heavily on her neck; she moved her long pale arms reaching out from the black, sleeveless sweater like an apparition. He knew that she had deep, dark eyes, smiled rarely, and had skin cool to the touch. How strange, he thought, to be able to stand in the library and watch her as if she were a stranger, to be able to enumerate her features—when only last night he had slept with her. He had awakened this morning with her arms twined around him; and then, too, he had wondered what he was doing and who she was.

He walked towards the desk, when she looked up and saw him, recognition and a smile flickered across her face. "You're five minutes early. The library doesn't close until five more minutes." Roger shrugged, staring at her. "Excuse me," she said and turned away from him to stamp the books of a rotund female person in a soft, black coat.

"I wonder what that woman would say if she knew about Lisbeth and me," Roger mused. Lisbeth stamped the books swiftly, and the rotund lady packed into the black, fur coat pattered away, across the marble floor of the library. Roger gazed at Lisbeth. "Soon we will be alone again," he thought. How would he act?

Presently the people were straggling from the building, the lights were being turned off; and Lisbeth, un-

huried, came upstairs from the basement with her coat off. As they walked down the sidewalk together, hunching against the cold, Roger felt that there was something he must do or say, some prescribed way of behaving after what had happened last night.

But he could not find anything to say, except to suggest coffee. When he held the door open for Lisbeth, she rubbed against him. He should not have noticed it, such a familiar occurrence; but he thought, "I really don't know her; she is a stranger to me yet." After last night they should have been close to each other, but they were not.

He sat across from Lisbeth in a booth. "Do you work tomorrow night?"

"No."

"I didn't think you did. Would you like to go to a show? *War and Peace* is playing."

"Yes. I read the book. Have you read it?"

"No."

"How are classes?"

"Fine."

But only this morning he had had a very unsatisfactory interview with his mentor. Here he was, teaching a junior English class, making brilliant observations in his graduate studies, a student on fellowship from another university, respected, admired, and quite . . . It was true that one would not notice him in a crowd nor pick him out of one because he was striking. Roger walked diffidently about his own business, and spoke with reserve, after having well thought out beforehand what he would say. When he laughed he was often startled and embarrassed by the sound of his own laughter. But he did not pretend to be what he was, a dashing personality; and he was proud of his maturity and dignity.

"Is this the first time that you have

been away from home?" the professor had asked. Roger had started to deny the fact; however, as he thought over his job as a psychological research worker at the university, and the summer holidays during which he had employed himself as a camp counsellor, Roger confessed to the professor the safe omnipresence of his own home always in the background. "How old are you?" his professor had asked. "I am only 22," Roger had replied. Roger's "wise and faithful tutor suggested that this summer he travel "about the country a bit," to gain some "experience", because Roger was "such a nice, young fellow." Irritated, Roger wondered just what the professor would say if he knew where Roger had spent the night and morning before the interview.

He took Lisbeth home, and she asked him if he would like to come in. They stood on the verendah in the cold. Roger glanced at the lighted living room behind the lace curtains, in which other boarders and roomers would be congregated. Perhaps they would smile at him and Lisbeth. No, he did not want to go in. "I have an 8:30 lecture to prepare for tomorrow." He kissed her, and she clung to him in the dark. Roger squeezed her hand as he let her go inside.

He sprawled himself across the bed that night, tossing onto his stomach and then turning on his back. Suddenly angry and frustrated, Roger felt that he had been unable to make contact with his professor; he felt that he had been unable to make contact with Lisbeth, either. He felt that the night before had not satisfied him; he felt cheated because he could not convince himself that he had mastered her in any way. Roger wished that he had gone in with her tonight. And then it occurred to Roger, lying unmoving in his bed, that he should feel guilty. He would have to marry Lisbeth.

Instinctively, he recoiled at the thought of marriage. Besieged by conflicting moralities and contradictory Don Juan philosophies,

Roger reviewed his friendship with Lisbeth: He had gone to the library looking for research material for an English paper, Lisbeth had helped him; it was as simple as that. Attracted by the pale, oval face, her air of intelligence and—yes, nobility, Roger invited her to have coffee with him one night. She accepted. They discovered that they lived only a few blocks apart. Roger asked her to go to a show. She came.

Lisbeth's outstanding quality was her nobility. Roger saw in her the noblest being that he knew alive. That she appeared cold and even supercilious to some people was simply an aspect of her natural inclination to be ever on guard against outrages directed at her purity. In Roger's eyes, she had made a sacrifice to him that in no way slandered her virtue. To sacrifice his so-called freedom as an adventurous male for Lisbeth would be an heroic gesture, and a privilege.

It was not difficult for a fertile imagination to think of her as being something bewitched and from a different world. Roger conjured up a vision of Lisbeth, wearing a severe, black dress ornamented by a white collar that framed her face, flitting through the mouldy, brownstone library. Possessively, he began to think of Lisbeth as a work of art that he could place in the lodging that he was going to provide for her. Would it be so bad, being married to Lisbeth? The idea of being married was new to Roger; he had never considered marrying anyone before now; and he could not picture himself married to Lisbeth. However, he supposed that he could get married; other people did it every day, so he could do it, too. He would get used to the idea. Thus rationalizing with himself about the situation, Roger finally fell asleep.

To Lisbeth, however, Roger said nothing about marriage, although he was tormented by the thought that some night she was going to ask him about it. He argued with himself that he wanted to ask her, must ask her; but he never did. One night as

he sat comfortably in his own room, smoking and regarding his possessions proudly and fondly; the leather-bound novels, the two Cambridge prints, the good landscape water color, he realized that if he married Lisbeth he would have to leave this room and give over what he owned to her. "Be damned if I will!" he muttered savagely. He got out of his chair and sorted some papers on his desk, thinking carefully, "She has said nothing to me. She has not mentioned that I owe her any obligation. I know nothing about such things. I need not be bothered about this affair." He told himself that the matter was closed; he would forget about the girl with the pale face. That he had thought he might marry her, one night before he fell asleep, seemed funny now to Roger. That Saturday he did not call Lisbeth; he went over to another student lecturer's apartment to drink beer.

Sunday morning, filled with remorse, he reprimanded himself for hurting so tender a person as Lisbeth. She had trusted him; she had given up everything she could to please him, and he had betrayed her faith. Roger phoned her up, explained away the evening previous, and asked her to go to church with him.

But still Roger mentioned nothing about marriage. Preoccupied by this thing about Lisbeth and himself, Roger went about the university with troubled thoughts hanging above his head like a black cloud or a precariously balanced heavy rock. How could he work? Who could work? He would be reading a page in an novel when suddenly "Lisbeth and me" would recur to his memory. He would put down his book and and look at the window of his room, acutely aware that she was perhaps sitting in her room, staring out her window at the impenetrable night outside, listening for some unknown, encouraging sound, perhaps on the stairs.

The only honorable thing for him to do would be to marry her. Being

the young man he was, it was inevitable that Roger come to this conclusion. In fact, he had known that ever since the night with Lisbeth, the night that he remembered as an unreal experience: Roger had been mesmerized by the hall light: its reflection had wobbled in the transom of Lisbeth's room like the refractory reflection of a lamp dangled into water. Thinking of Lisbeth and that night again, Roger grew warm beneath his sweater, and his shirt became wet at the armpits.

Roger mentioned his matrimonial decision to a friend one day at lunch. The friend, himself married, congratulated him with fervour, shook both his hands, and asked him who was his intended bride. Roger explained Lisbeth to his friend, whose name was Carl. Carl looked surprised. "I didn't know that you knew her."

"Why, do you know her?"

"Yes. However, it's none of my business whom you marry."

"What do you mean?" asked Roger, worried at the sober alteration in Carl's boisterous manners.

Embarrassed, Carl rose to leave. He picked up his brief case and wool scarf. "It's none of my business, Roger, old man," he added kindly. Carl put his hand on Roger's shoulder. "You're rather young to be thinging of getting married. Why don't you consider it some more before you take the fatal step? How well do you know this girl?"

Roger said, "I am older than you think."

Roger phoned Lisbeth. "I didn't know if you would be home or not. Would you mind if I came over, Lisbeth?" Hypnotized, Roger walked over to her rooming house. She met him at the old-fashioned dark green door with the small panes of glass in its face.

"What is it, Roger? You look worried."

"Do I?"

They went up to her room. There was no one else home in the house. Their footsteps echoed through the unoccupied rooms, up the stairs.

This time he and Lisbeth were not climbing towards her room to make love.

Lisbeth's room was as severe in decoration as her dress. Roger went over to the window seat and looked outside the window at the avenue. Snow on the doorsteps of the houses, and snow on the iron palings of the fences. He was aware of her standing behind him in the room, at the foot of the conservative green chesterfield bed, beside the chest of drawers with the blue vase on the top of it. He knew that light from the cold afternoon would be shining on her pale face and clear red lips, devoid of lipstick. She was a little English girl; she would be smiling at him, like a lady in a portrait painting, correct and shyly quiet.

Outside on the street an old man with an upper lip full of grey moustache, an old man wearing a wrinkled, brown overcoat, trudged toward the university hospital. Two young students, a boy, and a girl with a long, yellow scarf and gay, red socks walked slowly past Lisbeth's house, beneath her window. "See the old man, and the young boy and girl going by, Lisbeth," he wanted to say. But he did not. He could not; he felt uncomfortable because he knew that people were outside this room. He felt as though he was acting behind their backs.

He knew that Lisbeth was coming towards him. She kissed him lightly with her cool lips on the back of his neck. He had once thought that he had been cheated in his relationship with her. But she was closer to him than he had even been to her; because she did not let her feeling about other people in the world outside or other people's feelings about her intrude upon this room.

He asked her to marry him, thinking that the most important events in an man's life often passed away and were gone before he realized it. They were really quite commonplace happenings, as common as the ordinary rose drapes that were fading away on Lisbeth's window. They were real and yet they were unreal,

like the people outside on the street, and the drapes, that Roger could never take for granted as Lisbeth did.

"You're very sweet, Roger, but I can't marry you," was all she said.

Roger could not believe that she had spoken to him. "But why?" he finally choked out.

"There is someone else. I have a boy friend up North."

"A boy friend . . ."

"Yes."

"But you didn't tell me," he wanted to say. He simply could not believe it. "I don't believe you, Lisbeth. When have you seen him, Where did you see him last?"

"I spent the Christmas holidays with him."

Roger had gone home for the holidays.

The angel spoke, "I thought that you knew. I did not keep it a secret."

Roger felt like Alice in Wonderland as she fell, spinning down into the hare's hole, mystified, bewildered, and relieved when at last he felt his feet on the bottom, on the ground again. "You spent the holidays with him." Roger had a vivid image of Lisbeth floating up and down the stairs of this house: "Where are you going, Lisbeth?" "I'm going downtown to get a room. Fred is in."

Lisbeth was getting out her tea things. Roger stood up unsteadily. He stumbled against her, and a white china cup with pink and red flowers on it fell and broke on the floor. They looked at the cup broken on the floor. The cup's handle lay curled up by itself. "I—I'm sorry, Lisbeth." Lisbeth smiled at him, and Roger would have colored and he looked at her trembling mouth.

Roger's conception of Lisbeth as noble and pure was wrenched from him and lay shattered on the floor. There was no longer any need for Roger to sacrifice anything for her. But Lisbeth did not look ignoble. She still looked pale, and beautiful; she still looked noble. "I—I've got—I'm going now," Roger said.

Harlem

hey lil' doll
you come wi' me,
but i'm drunk
i'm drunk
what say lil' doll
you afraida me?
but i'm drunk
i'm drunk
big dance tonight
all people dere,
mighty nice lil' doll
mighty nice,
but i'm drunk
i'm drunk
it's dark in dere lil' doll
room fulla smoke
stale an' thick,
loud wi' holler
filled wi' jazz,
done matter 'tall
if you're drunk
you're drunk
nobody see 'cept maybe me.
one step more we' up re stair,
but i'm drunk
i'm drunk
payin' gal wi' peroxide hair,
looka me ah's feelin' rare,
but'n drune but dr . . .

E.N.T.

A Speech



By H. E. Young

I have been warned, I cannot define love.
Yet, for her sake, will I try.
Love is the remembrance of Eve
In the eye of every flower's maid
The laugh against the manless space
Round death's house and the cradle's aid.
My love is the home round my heart
That walls the warmth of summer's love
In a moist cavern and, above, the stars,
In love's great frost, are filled for me,
As, lonely in my need, my love comes far.
Yet, love turns the tongue into the wind
And there it is silent.

Strike

Canada has slowly stiffened during the ten-day strike of the Canadian Pacific Railway. It was as if creeping paralysis had affected some of the vital functions of a healthy loose-limbed giant. Some parts of the huge mass of Canada have been cut off from the rest of the body, some parts have functioned in a makeshift way, and great strain has pressed on the unparalysed parts of Canada, where the Canadian National Railway has carried a double burden.

It has been a bad time; but it becomes tedious to outline the individual hardships, the dislocation of trade, the choked storehouses, the empty shops, the stranded travellers, the lost wages, the lost revenue, the waiting ships. Canada has endured it, noting carefully that such a threat to her economic life must not happen again.

Brought about by the justifiable fear of men that their jobs are in jeopardy; and by the justifiable determination of management to improve their product, the strike is one of a long line of troubles following industrial revolutions. But this strike will have repercussions different from any other Canadian one, for it will leave its mark on the map. The face of Canada, its geography, its history and the story of its trade will change because 1957 opened with the Canadian Pacific Railway strike. Quite apart from the Union 'Case' or the CPR 'case', reasons and forces beyond the control of either Union or CPR will take over, and the shape of Canadian life will be moulded differently because of them.

Let us look at the contemporary picture.

All over Canada there is a competent bus network, transporting cheaply and efficiently an increasing flood of passengers every year.

Successful competition with the railways is hidden to some extent because rail passengers are as numerous as ever — But Canada's population in the last eight years has risen by over 7 percent. Compared with the trucking service — road-haulage to an Englishman — passenger transport by road has leaped ahead in the last five years. For although there are six times as many trucks as there were ten years ago registered in Ontario alone, the trucking service does not begin to compete with the railway.

There are three main reasons for this situation: unsuitable loads such as grain; too few good roads; and the habit of regarding rail-haul as the normal transport for freight.

The first reason—unsuitable loads — concerns us in this article only to the extent that trucks carry loads now-a-days which were beyond consideration 30 years ago. For instance, one truck transports six automobiles as a routine operation. However, there are some loads needing the sheer overwhelming capacity and space of the train.

But the second and third reasons will bear examination. We have had a time of emergency, a time to challenge conditions accepted without question since the railroads first spanned Canada, and in many communities the trucks have rumbled through the night carrying urgent long-distance loads for the first time in history.

"Just a temporary measure," says Authority. "Indeed, most useful help." But is it temporary? Why should it be? The old rules of trade — price, speed, dependability, — will decide whether the trucks have come to stay, or whether the traffic will revert to the CPR now the box cars have started rolling again.

Our second reason given by customer and truck owner alike, in explaining sparse traffic in long-distance trucking, is inadequate roads. This reason is not entirely valid. The bus-networks connecting places as far as Montreal and Mexico City, Toronto and Vancouver, Edmonton and New York, use the same roads, keep to a strict time-table, and charge low fares compared with the railways. Apart from these obvious advantages, the favorable attitude to bus travel lies in the Canadian habit of travelling by motor car irrespective of the condition of the roads.

This is not to say that Canadian roads are good, or even good enough. They are not. More and better roads have become an even stronger issue since the strike, for communities without roads have no trucks either, and never again must they be at the mercy of a railway strike. That recurring dream, the trans-Canada highway, is a good deal nearer realisation as a solid fact.

And now we come to the third reason: Use of the railroad for freight-carrying, from habit. Without examining the problem seriously, many Canadians have tended to accept the old-established view that long-distance road transport for freight was not a practical proposition. But this strike, having once jerked the goods out of the box car into the big diesel truck, has jerked out of a rut at the same time, a habit of mind that considered a bad road good enough for passenger traffic, but not good enough for freight. This is an important feat, accomplished as a valuable by-product during all national emergencies, and when a habit of mind gets a jolt serious enough, it examines the situation with new clarity.

If the trucking firms can offer attractive rates, and quick delivery to a regular schedule, then the successful ones are most unlikely to lose their business again, to the Canadian Pacific Railway.

The truck is mobile, independent of stations and track, and can deliver its load from door to door. Handling is the greatest expense in transport and in trucking this expense is halved when compared with transport by rail, for once the truck is loaded further handling becomes unnecessary until the load is delivered.

Certain firms have sent commercial freight by air for the first time, during the strike. Again the test will be whether the increased cost of air travel will nullify the longer time spent in transporting it by rail. Air transport may be the answer when machines or goods are needed urgently to go into instant production, or to supply a high-fashion order. It may be more profitable to get the freight quickly, and pay more in doing so, than to lose production or miss the market by slow transport with a unreliable delivery schedule.

Thus in 1957, this uneasy January, when most of us are undecided whether or not the third world war is already being waged, and between whom — it is logical to predict that the strike will promote in Canada a vigorous program of road development and instantly profiting from it, will be a large number of trucking firms, handling freight in bigger bulk and for greater distances than ever before envisaged in road transport.

Luxury trades will tend to use the quick mobile truck or the freight plane, more and more for their fashion products, dependent as they are on a short period of novelty for their wide margin.

The small remote communities will never again depend entirely on the railroad. Their new measure of independence will require access over a road, as well as 'the tracks' to the outside world. Access to the little towns may feed subsidiary industries that spawned them, should the railroad grind to a stop.

Yes. The strike of '57 will leave its mark.

Eclipse

The pain in his throat had come again. Familiar now, it left him in a mood of unconscious satisfaction. He blew the smoke out of his short pipe into the yellowish-beamed floor lamp where it first accumulated, then fluffed away through the shade. He had not really been aware of himself yesterday afternoon in the laboratory, standing there, bent over a compound which was a miracle he himself had created — something miraculous for which he had lost the magic word as it was lost in the fable which amused him as a boy. This had not been the first time he appeared to be absent-minded; there always seemed to be a crowd of people around him which he could not deny, made him suffer. Sometimes, when he looked at the mirror, he noticed the deep fold in his forehead. Had that fold always been there, right from the beginning of his attempt to get out of this crowd of people surrounding him? In such moments he was not certain, and he dared not inquire longer. He was seldom aware of the day and the hour. It appeared to him that time-keeping was not necessary—as unnecessary as the correct meal-hours which did not appeal to him because of their impersonality, like sitting down at a table with half-recognized faces whose names he never tried to remember.

He shrugged his shoulders in the same way as he had learned to ignore the black flies and mosquitos, a shrugging that expressed explicitly the state of being helpless in one's surroundings, as helpless as a horse with a broken leg, if there is no-one else around other than the mosquitos which used to give chase

across the empty plains.

Mechanically, his left hand reached to take a book out of the shelf, but stayed there on the back of the 'General Zoology'. He bent forward as if he had found a specimen of some kind of a vertebrate, never seen before, and yet familiar—so familiar that he recognized the structure, the veins which appeared to be laid down by pure chance. What was he doing with those veins on the back of the **General Zoology** anyhow? Slowly he took his hand from the volume, put it into his pocket as someone would have put a dead, but still warm bird into his pocket with the intention of hiding this once cherished, chirping creature from the eyes of his children. No, he no longer had to hide anything, for there was no longer anything to care about. There were no more cold stiff bees such as he used to pick up in the early spring mornings when he went down into the garden to the beehives he had built with his own hands. He had placed these wonderful beings on the palms of his dry, warm hands, returning to them the warmth they had lost during the cold spell of the night. No, there was nothing more to care about, and the growing pain in his throat gave him satisfaction that opposed the dismay he had felt when he had experienced this choking agony the first time, a few years before.

He remembered the day on the lake, sailing alone, fighting against the rising wind with a rope he could not untie fast enough, so that he had finally swung around in a full turn, losing his grip on the rope and leaving the boat riding free on

the blue-and-green reflecting waves. It must have been hours before he became conscious again, for it was cold then and he looked for his sweater, holding his left hand all the time against his throat, not knowing why, until his searching gaze fell upon the mast. Then he realized what had happened. He remembered how the mast had seemed to fall upon him, for suddenly there had been no more blue sky. A flash of a thought struck of how his mother, long ago, used to caress anxiously that part of his throat which seemed to be stricken then by something he could not explain. Although he refused to believe in the experience of this sun-woven day, yet he wondered about coincidences, he steered ashore on the fastest route possible. Back in his hotel room he changed and went down to the lobby of the hotel, skimmed through magazines he did not want to read, smoked cigarettes he did not want to smoke. Later, sipping his drink, he had listened to a tango, then walked upstairs refusing himself another look at the lake. But the breeze coming in from the lake, moved the curtain the whole night long.

Day after day, he had staggered about in the pine woods near the lake, not knowing why. The pain had ceased then, a few days after the strange mid-day sunset. Soon he had to leave to return to the country of falling leaves, and the bright gayness around him buried the experience which had choked him to pale terror. But he had grown small under the inquiring and sometimes indignant eyes of Margaret when she did not succeed in smoothing the small, but deep cleft between eyebrows and nasal bone.

And then they had gone to the concert. As usual they had met in the small cafe they loved because it overlooked the foggy river where the ships went by, seaward, leaving behind them a black and grey flag of smoke from which the seagulls dipped away.

The memory of that gay autumn

day had stayed with him during all these strange years he spent away from the revelation of his weakness and strength. It seemed as if he listened now to his own decline as he had listened to the cadenza in the Beethoven violin concerto, played by an artist he never wanted to know. Of course it had been an outstanding performance and had drawn elegantly dressed women; the *haut monde* of the metropolis knew instinctively where to spend a night like that. He had joked with Margaret and pointed to an elderly lady who had even brought her binoculars, for better listening. Margaret repaid him by giving him a quick glance to remind him that he himself had given her such a 'hearing aid.' They had exchanged a smile, and he reached for her hand.

The first movement was nearly over, played with unusual brilliance yet sensitivity, beyond the 'good performance' everyone expected on entering these solemn halls. The orchestra had ceased after a few introductory beats: the cadenza. He had felt a growing chill, expanding, then contracting. He had heard the waves coming, washing away the tide of his being, roaring against a sad belief he had never tried to account for: and staying. It would come back, always, like the tides, established and unavoidable. Unavoidable, precise. As precisely as the phenomenon there, with spider-like fingers, had aroused sparkles fusing soul and body to a flaming spot in his throat. Would the darkness come again? When, finally, would the waves and the blue sky carry him away? His cramped fingers, clutching his seat and Margaret's hand, had loosened. They were wet. No, this still was not his final performance. Perhaps he would become used to it, as he became used to himself. He was watching himself, through sterile glasses. He could see the way he had to go: through the waves and through the tides, until there was nothing left beyond the blue sky.

The last tone of the cadenza had

died away. The artist took his bow away from the strings, with the steadiness of an experienced surgeon. "Oh, darling," he had whispered to himself as he saw her rub her wrist, "There are others who do not have to think about silent waves and a blue sky. You are beautiful and you fancy you love me when I touch your hair. I shall miss you as I missed your understanding when I gave you the outermost star of the Great Bear; you laughed and

considered it a joke. But this is more than I could ever have given you. Now my hands are empty."

The concert had continued with the adagio as soft as her profile. The rest of the evening had nearly reduced to a beggar.

* * * * *

His pipe grew cold. Outside, the wind blew monotonously, shifting clouds of snow. But somewhere a very blue sky was waiting. He knew for he smiled.

Mumble Humble Apathy

saw a man on wooden legs,
mumble please mumble humble
pretty man on giant trees,
mumble humble couldn't see.
held the earth between his knees.
mumble humble might be me.

smothered with a party veil
watched him talkin' mighty swell,
mumble humble clean to hell.

tore the veil with a hypo mark
had a peek before the dark,
saw a little made him smart.
forget to be so mumble humble.

shouldn't rise and shouldn't fall
nothin' seems to work atall
like to die but then i aint
seen a gall who be a saint,
one that wasn't mumble humble.

found a book lordy me,
like the book and what she says.
lordy man think i'll read,
knows for sure i got my eyes,
shouldn't be so mumble humble.

E.N.T.

AUDREY LORD

The Clay Confessor

Although the neighbours were all new to the district, they still wondered briefly why Mrs. Coutts died.

"She seemed a healthy old lady and so spry for seventy-nine," said one woman to another as they hung out their washing.

"Yes, what a shame! She seemed like such a sweet woman."

"Dusting! Housework, and on Saturday!" Carole had growled the week before her grandmother's death. She glared accusingly at a peeling red flower in the linoleum. Then she flounced over, simpering affectedly at the lamp-shade, which tilted drunkenly on the top of its dark stand as she flicked it with a duster. "My, how lucky you are to have such a charming Grandmother! Mine died before I had a chance to know her." She yanked the shade straight, but it swayed back again.

"Oh! damn!" Her frustration burst out. She paused shocked at using the forbidden word. Still, her parents were away on holiday, and she was alone in the house with her grandmother. Grandmother was deaf. "Damn and damn!" She completed her childish rebellion by stamping her foot and throwing down the duster. Then she flopped down on her stomach on the linoleum, supporting her chin with her hand and chewing one finger-nail. It was just too much. A hot tired Saturday, after a week spent at her boring job in the office where she was working for the summer. She pried off one of her moccasins with the toe of the other and sank into angry silence.

She was fifteen and would enter

Grade Eleven in the fall. Younger than most of her classmates, she was beginning to experience a budding popularity and an awakening longing for this popularity. There would be more parties and dances this year. There might even be a circle of close friends, friends who were somebody and who knew everybody.

"Oh, what's the use! Gran will never let me have anyone in here. Oh, dear, no, her nerves couldn't stand it. Anyway, who'd want to come here. I'd die if any of the girls saw this place after the swell homes they've got."

She knew everything in this room, with an accuracy born of dusting and an intimacy born of hatred. She was just growing to realise the ugliness of the house. It was stolid and dull-faced, flaunting its drab respectability, as it stood between two rooming houses. Thanks to her Grandmother, it could still boast of being a family house while the others were advertised as 'good income properties'. Inside, the house was as ugly as outside. She disliked the bedroom, choked with large beds, enveloped in chenille-tufted spreads. She shuddered at the bathroom, a cacophony of colours; pink floor, red mat, green and yellow walls. But this room, this room was the worst, the ultimate in cluttered ugliness; a combined dining-sitting room, it combined the poorest features of both.

Mentally she reviewed the special objects of her hatred. Lace! There were sagging lace curtains, straggling across all the windows, an old, yellowing lace cloth on the dining table, and a lace runner on the

side-board. Lace and rugs. Little rugs were everywhere, sliding about on the polished floor, or struggling vainly to cover holes in the worn carpet, which, her grandmother said, was quite good enough to last out her life-time. Lace and rugs and useless little tables and lamps; their inert ugliness disgusted her.

But the knick-knacks, the bric-a-brac, the dime store rubbish, these she hated actively. Junk, bought casually for a quarter, and now for some incomprehensible reason treasured by her grandmother. Every day she had to pick them all up and dust the insipid dogs, the spiritless deer and the polar bear, which was so poorly made that at first glance, it looked like a mis-shapen snow-ball. Every flat surface was covered with such objects—the radio, the window-ledges, the table, the side-board, and the mantel-piece, crowding among the photographs of family relations.

Below, seated alone on the hearth, beside the gas-heater, sat the pottery cat, her grandmother's special treasure. The cat was really a teapot, which succeeded in being neither useful nor decorative. Its joints were of necessity painfully contorted. Its tail was curved back as the handle; its two front legs clawed forward together to form the spout and its head formed the lid of the pot. Yet her grandmother loved this cheap deformed animal. Carole had seen her sometimes, with her eyes fixed upon it and her lips moving, almost, almost as though she were making a sort of confession to it. Carole looked at the cat more closely. Right now, the lid was twisted so it was sneering directly at her. "Okay, smirk, you fool!" she spat back at that grin, "You're too ugly even to be funny!"

This malformed cat was at home in the room. In her house, she knew, she would have a huge china model of a tiger, accurately made and painted. Only this in the room for ornament. She rolled over off her stomach and stretched slowly, feeling the floor hard and pleasantly

cool against her back. Her eyes became dreamy.

"The tiger. Amber walls. I'll have a tawny rug and sea-green chairs. A touch of black here and there, sharp as the stripes in the tiger . . . I'll wear velvet toreador pants and rise graciously from cushions to greet my guests and . . ."

"Carole," the words shredded her thoughts, "Carole, you silly girl, get up off that cold floor this instant! Don't you realize that it will weaken your kidneys?" She felt the muscles along her jaw tighten. She had completely failed to hear the footsteps on the stairs or the creak of the opening door. "Really, Carole, you should know better at your age. Have you finished dusting yet?"

"Uhu." This was just a neutral sound, and not really a lie.

"Well, do pick up the duster then and put it away."

Carole got up, went into the kitchen. "And do put on the kettle for a cup of tea, will you, Dear?"

"Anything else?" muttered the girl, rebelliously.

Mrs. Coutts did not hear her. She sat down heavily in her favorite chair by the hearth. This morning, she was wearing a dowdy house-dress, old and ripping, for her new dresses were left to hang cautiously unworn in her closet. Her hair, thick and off-white, was springing up from a vigorously brushed-out permanent wave, and powder-puffed on carelessly—caked her nose like flour. The veins in her eyes were red. Although a healthy old woman, she was unwilling to admit it, and this morning she felt very old, old and unwanted. Her daughter had left with her husband on holiday, without taking her along. For a week now, she had been alone with Carole.

"They simply want to get rid of me. Waiting for me to die so they can have my money." She savored these words with a mournful pleasure. "Well, it's my house, and I shall do just as I wish here." She nodded with satisfaction at the clay cat. Two years ago, Carole's parents

had moved in from their small farm to stay with the old lady after her husband died. They stayed on, because they knew that despite her vociferous protests to the contrary, she could not get along without them.

Carole returned to the room, carefully balancing a tea-cup on top of the cookie can. Mrs. Coutts brightened at once. "Thank you, Carole. This is very nice of you. But why don't you put some cookies out on a plate? It isn't correct to bring the whole can."

"Yes, I know, but still . . ." Mentally she added, "Should be glad to get your tea, you old fool."

"Now, Carole, when I was your age, I used to wait on a minister's table so I should know what is correct."

"Yeah, well, so what?"

"Pardon? What did you say? Must you really mumble like that? . . . Do pour yourself out a cup of tea and drink it with me."

"Okay," sighed the girl, making a somewhat graceless effort to humor the old lady. She went slowly into the kitchen and dragged reluctantly back.

"The MacDonald's, that's the minister's you know, were a wonderful family. I was supposed to be the nursery maid, for their children, but I helped in lots of other ways too. I stayed with them for six years. Mrs. MacDonald gave me this cloth when I was married." She stroked a corner of the lace between her fingers. Carole sighed wearily. She knew so well what would come next. Her grandmother raised her eyes to over-sized family portrait, which disproportioned the rest of the room. "That's your grandfather and I there. My John was certainly a handsome man and so tall! I was pretty enough myself in those days. There were plenty of lads who wanted to walk out with me. My waist was only twenty-one inches when I was married, but I can remember how I worried about my nose. It really is a good thing you take your nose

from your father's side of the family."

Carole sighed again. This talk and this house were stifling her. "I think I'll go swimming," she said abruptly.

Mrs. Coutts ignored this interruption. She wanted to talk of the past that was so much brighter to her than the aging present. She tried to lure her grandchild. "Your grandfather never thought he would have a chance to win me. He told me he had always loved me, but I went around with his best friend." A coy note entered her voice. "But then Dave suddenly went away . . ." "To New Zealand," continued Carole in a monotone.

"Yes, New Zealand. And we gradually stopped writing to each other . . ."

"Uhu . . . Gran, I'm going swimming. Okay? Can you manage your own lunch?"

"Of course I can! I'm perfectly capable of looking after myself." She was offended at this break in her memories and hurt by the reference to her age. She sought to wound, as a child would, thoughtlessly, yet more maliciously than any child. "But since you stay here without paying any rent, I can surely expect some consideration from you. I could take in boarders and make money. If you are going upstairs, take your shoes with you. You have two pairs lying under the stove. And the coat rack is full again. Do you have to spread your things all over my house?"

Carole struggled against the house and the heat to control her temper. "Don't fight with your Grandmother," her mother had said before she left. "She really isn't responsible for all she says any more." She had promised. Otherwise, her mother would have taken the old lady with them and her mother needed the break. But it was hard to remember good intentions. Why didn't they simply get a house of their own again, anyway? A simple, tasteful house, where she could invite her friends. Leave Gran alone

here to sulk in her lair, if, as they thought, she was too stubborn to move. She shuffled sullenly from the room.

And the old woman talked on to the pottery-cat teapot. "Really, I don't know what has got into that girl, she used to be such a sweet little child. When I went to the farm to visit, she would climb on my knee and look in my purse for candies or a sucker." She smiled at the memory; and the cat, its head twisted to watch her, smiled knowingly back.

She talked of the past, and the cat always listened patiently to her. To it, she confessed all her troubles and griefs. She even confessed to it, and to it alone, that sometimes she was in the wrong; that sometimes she hated the sharp words that slipped from her tongue, loosened by age. And there was sympathy and understanding in its smile.

She loved the other little ornaments too, for they all had a past. There was the small glass dog, that had held candies on a long-ago Christmas and the twin swan candle-holders bought by a proud child for 'Grandma'. None of them were twenty-five cent bargains any more. But she loved above all the pottery teapot. John, her husband, had given it to her, two years ago, just before he died.

"Remember, Hattie," he said, "It's like the other one I bought you when we were engaged. The one we left behind when we came to Canada." He was not a demonstrative man, and the gift revealed to her the depth of his love. The memories had wound back through the years together to that first china cat, bought at a village fair. She knew, if she paused, that this teapot was only two years old. She knew, but she would often forget, for time had little meaning now. This cat was unique: it had a life born of her memories. It would never betray her confessions. She talked to it, her lips moving though her words were inaudible.

"Kitty," she crooned lovingly, as she bent with difficulty to pick it up. She grasped it by the tail-handle and saw that it was dusty. She stared in disbelief.

Carole banged back into the room, her rolled towel under her arm. "Only one of the coats on the hall stand was mine. I put it in my room. The rest of the stuff is yours." She shot these words out defiantly.

Mrs. Coutts replied with her brief uncontrolled anger. "You have not dusted this cat! Not for days probably. Can't you do anything properly?"

"I did too. There's a lot of dust in these rooms." A childish lie, she knew.

"That is not true. You had better take a duster and finish up the work while I do the dishes."

"There's only two cups: don't put yourself out." She took the teapot from her grandmother as the old lady moved toward the kitchen. "I hate you, I hate you," she screamed soundlessly at her grandmother's back, "I hate you, you old bitch!" Fury swept over her head as she felt herself say the cheap word.

She looked down. The cheap, contorted face of the cat sneered knowingly up at her. She twisted it neck convulsively and the head came away in her hands. With repulsion and hatred she flung it away from her, dropped the obscene headless body and ran from the room. She shivered with delight as she heard the crash of the head, shattering against the mantel. Then she fled out the door.

Mrs. Coutts stood, motionless, a moment, in helpless silence. Then slow tears filled her eyes, ran down her nose, and sank into the furrows of her mouth. Hate and bitterness were swollen out of her heart by a pulsing of sorrow.

"Carole, Carole! . . . No, it's not your fault. I know I've been a mean old woman. But kitty, kitty." She dropped in mourning over the shattered bits of pottery clay. Her friend, her confessor, lay dead here.

But yet there was hope. She could shut the fragments in a box and in the body of the clay confessor her memories would be conserved. Deep sorrow filled her, but she could live with this sorrow. Perhaps live sweetly, for sorrow is warm, and old age needs warmth.

Carole re-entered the house by the back door, hesitant, a little afraid, but genuinely sorry, for her brief rage had been broken by her action. Seeing the old lady kneeling on the floor, she crouched beside her.

"Grannie, Dear! Grannie, I'm terribly sorry. Really, I am."

"Don't worry, Carole, you must forgive me for being so sharp." Her voice broke in a sob. In her relief from fear, the girl's self-hatred grew. She sobbed and took her grandmother close, as she used to do when she was small. They both knew a pure moment of sweetness as they clung together. But Carole had to speak, impelled by a young embarrassment before emotion.

"I'm sorry, so sorry, Grannie, but don't worry, I'll buy you another to replace it."

"That's a kind thought, Dear, but you could never do that. Your Grandfather gave it to me in Scotland when we were engaged."

"No, no, remember you got it two years ago," Carole half scolded. "There must be lots more in the shops down-town. I'm sure I've

seen them. I'll get you another just like it. They're not expensive at all."

Silence slid through the room and died in a crash as the door swung back against the doorbell.

"No, don't bother," said the old lady slowly, "Please run along and swim now. Close the screen behind you . . . No, "she answered the girl's inquiring look, "I'm fine now."

Carole swung cheerfully out of the house. Grandmother had really been swell about it. She would buy her another teapot and make up for it. Her thought turned ahead, imagining the cool water of the swimming pool. Behind her, in the house, Mrs. Coutts stood undecided, then a few minutes later she too left and went down-town alone. "There aren't any more. There can't be any more. John gave it to me. It is mine, mine," she mumbled over and over on the packed bus. Down town, she was bullied through the crowded streets and pushed up at last into a large store. She stood still a long time before the cheap china-ware counter, when the price of the shoddy goods was crayoned crudely upon them.

She looked at the tea-pots. A whole row of them, cats smiling the same empty mocking smile at her. Her confessor had betrayed her to these others. Her confidences were dispersed and lost among their empty forms. She had left neither hate nor sorrow, and her heart was empty, empty as the clay cat's head.

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